

## General exercises for COVID-19 units (orange and red zones)

These exercises help to maintain users' abilities during an episode of COVID-19 requiring a stay in the orange or red zone. The exercises must be done daily and can be spread throughout the day, depending on the user's alertness level and the staff's availability.

**Caution for safe exercise:** Avoid worsening fatigue and others symptoms.

**For users who are sufficiently alert:**

### Breathing exercise:

☐ **1.** To help relax and maintain lung capacity: Take a deep breath, inflate the lungs as much as possible, then exhale slowly.  
Repeat 10 times, 3 times a day.

### Head movements:

☐ **2.** Turn the head as far as possible to the left, then to the right. Repeat 10 times on each side.



**As soon as the user is able:**

- Sit in a chair or armchair during meals;
- Walk to the bathroom or the commode;
- Participate in activities of daily living (personal hygiene, dressing, etc.) as much as possible;
- Complete the attached exercise programs. Gradually increase the level (1 to 3) according to their abilities.

## Level 1 exercise program

For all bedridden users (who are unable to get out of bed or sit on the edge of their bed or in a chair):

### Mobilization and strengthening of the legs:



- **1. Assisted:** Bend the knee toward the abdomen, with the foot at about a 90° angle to the leg. Support the leg firmly with both hands. When resistance is felt (without any pain for the user), hold for 3 seconds, then slowly lower the leg onto the bed. Do one leg at a time. Repeat 10 times for each leg.

### Variations to increase the difficulty:

- Lift the leg by themselves, with increasingly less assistance;
- With the leg fully flexed, hold the position unassisted for 3 seconds;
- Hold the leg during the downward movement and prolong the descent as long as possible;
- Do the exercise completely alone, using their arms.



- **2.** With one knee bent and the other leg extended, lift the extended leg 1-6 inches off the bed, depending on their ability. Hold for 3 seconds. Repeat 5-10 times for each leg.

## Mobilization and strengthening of the arms:

□ **3. Assisted:** Hold the arm at the wrist and elbow (bent to 90°). Slide the arm away from the body (on the mattress) as high as possible toward the head. When resistance is felt (without any pain for the user), hold for 5 seconds, then slowly return the arm to its initial position. Do one arm at a time. Repeat 10 times for each arm.



□ **4.** Raise the arm (a stick can be used in the variations described below). Repeat 10 times.

□ **5. Assisted:** Slowly bring the arm backwards, supporting it with both hands. When resistance is felt (without any pain for the user), hold for 5 seconds, then slowly return the arm to its initial position. Do one arm at a time. Repeat 10 times for each arm.



## Variations to increase the difficulty:

- Lift the arm by themselves, with increasingly less assistance;
- Hold the arm during the downward movement and prolong the descent as long as possible;
- Do the exercise completely alone, using the other arm if needed.
- Using a stick, do the exercise simultaneously with both arms.

□ **6.** With arms positioned alongside the body, slide arms up as high as possible on the bed (to form a cross) and clap hands together in the air above the head (elbows extended). Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.

## Level 2 exercise program

For all users who can safely sit on the edge of the bed or in a chair:

### Mobilization and strengthening of the legs:

□ **1.** In a seated position, bend the knee and pull it as close as possible to the abdomen (without pain). Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly lower the leg. Do one leg at a time. Repeat 10 times for each leg.



### Variations to increase the difficulty:

- Raise the leg using the hands as little as possible;
- Raise the leg without using the hands;
- Hold the leg during the downward movement and prolong the descent as long as possible;

□ **2.** In a seated position, raise the foot and extend the leg as close to horizontal as possible. Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly lower the leg. Do one leg at a time. Repeat 10 times for each leg.

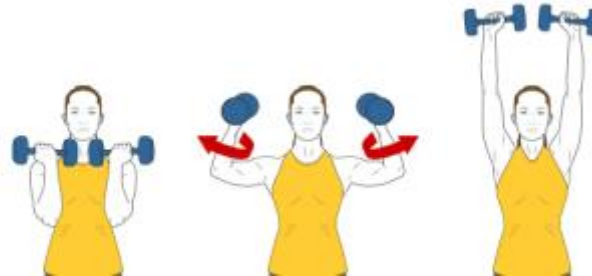
### Variations to increase the difficulty:

- Hold the leg during the downward movement and prolong the descent as long as possible;
- Do both legs at the same time.



## Mobilization and strengthening of the arms:

□ **3.** In a seated position, place both hands on your chin. Spread your arms, keeping your elbows bent to 90°, and raise both hands as high as possible toward the ceiling. Do the exercise in reverse to return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times (start with no weights).



## Variations to increase the difficulty:

- Hold the arms during the downward movement and prolong the descent as long as possible;
- Use weights (e.g., dumbbells or small water bottles).

## Grip strength:



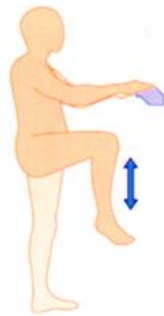
□ **4.** Holding a stress ball (textured or not), close the fist as tightly as possible. Repeat 10 times for each hand.  
If a ball is not available, use a rolled-up washcloth.



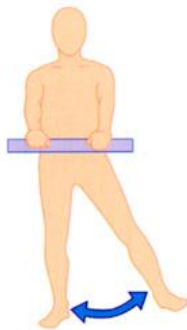
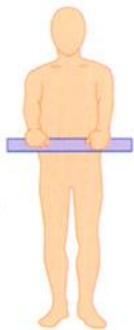
## Level 3 exercise program

For users who are able to stand up safely with a stable support (e.g., bed rail or handrail):

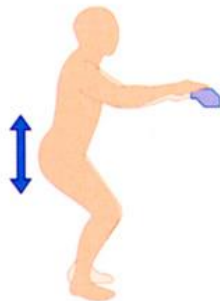
### Mobilization and strengthening of the legs:



- **1.** In a supported standing position, raise one knee as high as possible. Try to hold it for 5 seconds. Lower as slowly as possible. Repeat 10 times for each leg.



- **2.** In a supported standing position, raise one leg to the side as far as possible, keeping the upper body straight. Try to hold it for 5 seconds. Lower as slowly as possible. Repeat 10 times for each leg.



- **3.** In a supported standing position, bend both knees slightly, then stand up again. Bend lower to increase the difficulty level. For added safety, place a chair behind you. Repeat 10 times.

- **4.** In a supported standing position, rise up onto your tiptoes, lower back down, then shift your weight onto your heels, and lift your toes. Repeat 10 times.



## Mobilization and strengthening of the arms:

□ **5.** In a seated position (or standing with supervision if the person's balance is stable), place both hands on your chin. Spread your arms, keeping your elbows bent to 90°, and raise both hands as high as possible toward the ceiling. Do the exercise in reverse to return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times.



## Variations to increase the difficulty:

- Hold the arms during the downward movement and prolong the descent as long as possible;
- Use weights (e.g., dumbbells or small water bottles).

## Grip strength:



□ **6.** Holding a stress ball (textured or not), close the fist as tightly as possible. Repeat 10 times for each hand. If a ball is not available, use a rolled-up washcloth.

